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Libertarians defend contributors to Clintons' legal defense fund

'Blame the politicians — not their victims'

WASHINGTON, DC —The Asian-American business people who have contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to Bill Clinton's legal defense fund have drawn support from an unlikely source: the Libertarians.

"These people are victims — not friends — of Bill Clinton," party Chairman Steve Dasbach said today. "They are victims of a government that demands payment from citizens in order to help them or, in some cases, to keep from hurting them and ruining their lives.

"Blaming citizens for appeasing politicians is like blaming the littlest kid on the block for paying the neighborhood bully to leave him alone."

Bill and Hillary Clinton faced a blizzard of questions this week after announcing that they had returned \$600,000 to Asian-American entrepreneur Charles Yah Lin Trie. Trie had donated the money to the Clintons' legal fund, which they set up in 1994 to defend themselves against charges of financial and sexual improprieties. Trie's motives also came under scrutiny.

"The government wields tremendous power over all of us, and Mr. Trie knew that," Dasbach said. "It can bankrupt a business by subsidizing its competitors, by harassing business owners and their employees, even by regulating it out of existence."

As an example, Dasbach cited Mike Welbel of Chicago, whose business was targeted by the EEOC in 1993. Although five of Welbel's 26 employees were black and the other 21 were Hispanic, Welbel was told he hadn't hired enough blacks. The government ordered him to spend \$10,000 on newspaper ads to find all the blacks he had not hired — and pay each one \$123,991.

"Mr. Welbel didn't have the money to protect himself like Mr. Trie did," Dasbach said.

Federal agents and bureaucrats routinely subject Americans to a wide array of other abuses, Dasbach noted. "They have written more than 200 statutes giving them power to seize private property without trial. They have jailed homeowners for putting sand in their own back yard. They have conducted secret radiation experiments on mentally disabled children."

Dasbach acknowledged that most people believe the way to bring the government under control is to reduce the amount of money in politics.

"But that's like outlawing protection payments without going after the mob. The real problem is that government has seized far too much power. Until that power is reduced, each of us is at the mercy of the biggest neighborhood bully in the nation: the federal government."

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